

# FEAS Observations on MUL230026- Wicklow County Council Wicklow Port dredging application

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## Summary

- Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services (FEAS) Marine Institute, were asked by DAFM for observations on MUL230026 application by Wicklow County Council for dredging in Wicklow port and dumping at sea, being administered by MARA.
- The following response is with consideration of potential impacts on sea fisheries and the seafood sector, including aquaculture.
- Maintenance dredging is proposed of the navigation channel, turning basin and berths within Wicklow Port and disposal of dredged material at the offshore disposal site near Arklow.
- A licence is sought from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2032 inclusive, with operations dictated by weather and associated sedimentation incurred in the harbour.
- The area to be dredged covers 0.054 km<sup>2</sup> within Wicklow Harbour; the disposal site offshore from Arklow Harbour, covers 0.589 km<sup>2</sup>
- The proposed dumping site was granted Permit (S0002-01) by the EPA in 2011 for disposal of material dredged from Arklow Harbour.
- Dredged material is expected to comprise mainly silt, sand and small amounts of gravel.
- National and international fishing operations are recorded in close proximity to the mouth of Wicklow harbour and the proposed dumping site (<https://atlas.marine.ie>; 2014 to 2018).
- The dumping area is in close proximity to spawning and nursery grounds of some commercially important species including cod.
- Considering the short nature and small areas of proposed operations, they should not interfere with fishing activities, assuming any necessary Marine Notices are made, or fish ecology/biology.
- There are no aquaculture sites within or adjacent to the dredge or disposal areas.